Welcome

- **Introductions**
  - Tell us who you are and what your job is?
  - Write on a Post-it® note what you would like to get from the two workshops on Communication and place it on the flipchart

- **Ground rules**
  - Relax
  - Participate
  - Experiment
Think of someone you know **personally** that you consider to be a **very effective communicator**

Write down three to four attributes of his/her communication style that you admire

Discuss them in your small groups and come up with a composite list of attributes

Report out to the large group
Think of someone you know personally that you consider to be an ineffective communicator

Write down three to four attributes of his/her communication style that are of concern

Discuss them in your small groups and come up with a composite list of attributes

Report out to the large group
Factors That Can Aid or Hinder Communication
2011 Annette Veech, PhD

Recognition, Reward, or Blame?

- Authority
- Responsibility
- Control

- Logistics
- Hand Offs
- Paper Trails

- Emotions
- Expertise
- Culture

- Risk Level
- Support
- Outcomes
The award-winning 1980 movie *Ordinary People* depicts an upper middle class family in distress.

Eldest son Bucky (his mother’s favorite), drowns in a boating accident; his brother Conrad survives the accident.

The mother is cold towards her remaining son; Conrad survives a suicide attempt; he subsequently spends time in a psychiatric hospital and is currently under the care of a psychiatrist.

The father desperately tries to keep the family together, and he tries to facilitate loving communication between his wife and son.
Let’s refer back to the “Factors That Can Aid or Hinder Communication” chart

Working in your small groups, use the chart’s framework to identify some of the factors affecting the relationship and the communication issues between mother and son

Think of how you may have experienced and/or been witness to how the environment surrounding a communication encounter has affected the outcome

Report your learnings to the larger group
What is conflict?

So, is conflict inevitable?

At inception, is conflict, neutral, positive, or negative?

Can effective communication occur in the midst of conflict?

Conflict can promote problem-solving, perspective, communication, paradigm shift, growth, or inefficiencies, relationship issues, frustration

*Kilmann Diagnostics*
Two Underlying Dimensions of Conflict-Handling Behaviors

- Assertiveness
- Cooperativeness
Two Underlying Dimensions of Conflict-Handling Behaviors

- Competing
- Collaborating
- Compromising
- Avoiding
- Accommodating

Axes:
- Assertiveness
- Cooperativeness
Conflict Modes

• **Compromising** – Moderate assertiveness and cooperativeness; finds an expedient, mutually acceptable solution that satisfies all

• **Avoidance** – Unassertive and uncooperative; neither pursues own concerns or those of others; does not address the conflict; sidesteps, postpones or withdraws

• **Collaborative** – Assertive and cooperative; works with others to create a resolution; digs into an issue to pinpoint underlying needs/wants
Conflict Modes

• **Competing** – Assertive and uncooperative; pursues own concerns at expense of others using whatever power needed to win position

• **Accommodating** – Unassertive and cooperative; neglects own concerns to satisfy others, element of self-sacrifice
8 Key Attributes of a Conflict Situation

- Is there overwhelming stress?
- Is the conflict simple or complex?
- How important is the topic (and to whom)?
- Is there sufficient time?
- Is there sufficient trust?
- Are good listening and communication skills present?
- Does culture encourage sharing of needs/concerns?
- Is relationship important?
The Best Approach to Conflict Management

- Know that you have all five modes available to you at all times
- Develop the ability to assess the eight key attributes of a conflict situation
- Enact the chosen mode with care, sensitivity, and respect
- Switch to a different mode as the attributes of a situation change
- Continue to improve your listening and communication skills – and your ability to engender trust
Effective Communication
Streamlined Competency Model*

- **Lead by demonstrating expectations**
  - Plan ahead to manage risk
  - Assess stakeholders’ perspectives (logical vs. emotional)
  - Explain logic behind critical thinking, so all envision “one” outcome

- **Communicate strategically**
  - Focus on observable behaviors; avoid references to “attitude”
  - Listen actively without building defense; rephrase others’ perspectives
  - Use active voice for action; passive voice for bad news

*2011 Annette Veech, PhD
Manage the difficult moments

- Clarify purpose and intended outcomes
- Acknowledge feelings; ask variations of “five whys”
- Reiterate, precisely and concisely, benefits of next steps and outcomes

*2011 Annette Veech, PhD
Practice

Role Play

• Because of a water main failure in your building, most of the classrooms are out of service

• This causes stress and turmoil because two faculty members have final exams scheduled for the entire day tomorrow, and there is only one classroom available

• The Division Chief calls a meeting to discuss and resolve
# Ideas for Communicating Precisely and Concisely

## Structure What You Have to Say
- Compare to similar information
- Present new information
- “Chunk” the information
- State the most important information first
- Frame
- Use “five hat racks” (category, time, location, alpha, continuum)

## Plan to Increase Retention
- Simplicity
- Surprise
- Concreteness
- Credibility
- Emotion
- Story
- von Restorff Effect (position unique words, concepts, images at critical points)

## Manage Expectations
- Cost-benefit, from all perspectives
- Ockham’s Razor (use the simplest design)
- Scarcity (exclusive information; limited access, time or number; suddenness)

## Prepare for Objections
- Be aware of cognitive dissonance (mental discomfort causes people to reduce the importance or add their own spin)
- Apply progressive disclosure (offer details in layers, to avoid overload)

---

Sources: *Universal Principles of Design*, by W. Lidwell, K. Holden, & J. Butler. The first six points in column two are drawn from Malcolm Gladwell’s *The Tipping Point*
Wrap-up

• *Words matter – choose them wisely (what you say)*

• *Tone matters – match tone to the situation (how you say it)*

• *Your reaction matters – response should be geared towards productive outcomes*

• *Conflict is inevitable – manage it, use most appropriate mode*

• *Seek to understand the environment – generally, there is a lot going on beyond the conversation*
Today I learned . . .
Back-Up Charts
Conflict Management Modes

When to use Avoiding

• Stress is overwhelming
• Problem is simple
• Problem is not important
• There is not much time
• Interactions are ineffective
• Low levels of trust and a negative culture are present
• The reward system doesn’t foster cooperation and teamwork
• People don’t care about the relationship
When to use **Collaborating**

- Stress is stimulating
- Problem is complex
- Problem is important
- There is time
- Interactions are effective
- High levels of trust
- Reward system actively fosters cooperation and teamwork
- Relationships are important
Conflict Management Modes

When to use Compromise

• Moderate stress
• Simple/complex
• Minimum to moderate important
• Enough time
• Sufficient trust
• Good listening and communication skills
• Culture important
• Relationship important
Conflict Management Modes

When to use Competing

- High stress
- Problem more complex
- Very high importance
- Limited/finite time
- Neutral trust
- Not a culture of sharing
- Relationship not as important
When to use **Accommodating**

- Stress by the other
- Conflict simple
- Topic important to other
- Limited time
- Trust is sufficient
- Communication present
- Culture open
- Relationship important